

# Tale Feathers

March  
2006

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## Inside

Annual Dinner  
Announcement

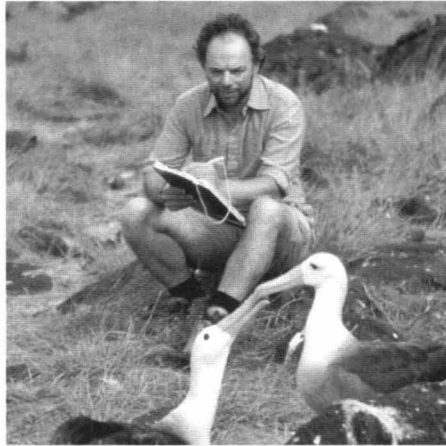
President's  
Report

March/April  
Bird Walks

Opportunities &  
Announcements

Wings of Spring  
Festival Info

Update on Little  
Creve Coeur  
Lake



### ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

Friday, March 31<sup>st</sup>

*Dr. Carl Safina, Eye of the Albatross: Visions of Hope and Survival*

We are very pleased to announce our 2006 Annual Awards Dinner will again be hosted by Pat & Jack Lueders at the Cheshire Inn's Palladium Room at 6300 Clayton. Awards will be presented for Conservationist of the Year, Legislator of the Year and the Robert J. Terry Lifetime Achievement. A silent auction will be held, with proceeds directly benefiting the Society's conservation and education work around the region.

We are deeply honored to have Dr. Carl Safina as our keynote speaker. A prominent ecologist and author, Dr. Safina is a former vice president of the National Audubon Society and co-founder and current president of the Blue Ocean Institute. He has authored two award-winning books: *Eye of the Albatross: Visions of Hope and Survival* (winner of the 2003 John Burroughs Medal for natural history writing) and *Song for the Blue Ocean: Encounters Along the World's Coasts and Beneath the Seas* (winner of the Lannan Literary Award for Nonfiction). His love of nature began while his family raised canaries and pigeons as a child, matured while studying hawks and seabirds with the National Audubon Society and has led to a recognition that all life on the planet is affected by the oceans. He founded the Living Oceans Program at National Audubon, but ultimately felt the need for a unique, independent effort to help save the oceans. The Blue Ocean Institute, which he co-founded in 2003, is designed to inspire, rather than demand, conservation of the oceans through a non-traditional combination of science, art and literature.

Dr. Safina's talk will be based on his book, *Eye of the Albatross*, for which he spent months in the distant oceans of the world, chronicling the travels of one particular albatross named Amelia, whose stupendous travels were tracked via satellite as she ranged thousands of miles to find food for her patiently famished chick. These immense creatures we call "albatross" are the greatest long-distance wanderers on Earth. Big birds in big oceans, albatrosses lead big, sprawling lives across space and time, traveling to the limits of seemingly limitless seas. They accomplish these distances by wielding the wondrous body architecture of creatures built to glide indefinitely.

*(Article and Registration continue on page 5)*

## St. Louis Audubon Society

# Opportunities

and

# Announcements

Mission Statement  
of  
The St. Louis  
Audubon Society

Help our community  
sustain biological  
Diversity through  
Nature.

Goals  
To foster an aware-  
ness and under-  
standing  
of birds and other  
wildlife and their  
habitats

To educate our com-  
munity so people  
can make  
informed decisions  
about the natural  
world.

## Birds Along the Mississippi Flyway

The St. Louis Audubon Society will present a 2 night course at Meramec Comm. College in April to meet curriculum requirements for the Master Naturalist Certificate. It will be held on April 19 and April 26 at 7:00 pm at Meramec. The presentation will be on migration of birds along the Mississippi Flyway. It will cover both transient birds, birds that winter in our area, and birds that nest here—then migrate—both long distance and short distances. It will also include the navigational tools these birds use to find their destinations. This will cover all birds seen in our area and with no specific emphasis on any particular classification of birds. There will be two field trips on the following Saturdays after the class sessions. The first will be on April 22, to a local area to see some spring migrants and the second on April 29, will be to Riverlands to coincide with the Spring Birding Festival.

For more information contact Meramec Comm. College Continuing Education at 314-984-7777 or go to their web site at [www.stlcc.edu](http://www.stlcc.edu) and look under Mater Naturalist Programs.

## **St. Louis Audubon Society to host Audubon Society of Missouri Spring Meeting May 5-7, 2006**

Mark your calendars! The Audubon Society of Missouri (ASM) will have its Spring Meeting in St. Louis May 5- 7, 2006. All are invited. Hosted by the St. Louis Audubon Society, weekend festivities will include a Friday evening reception and warbler ID workshop presented by Bill Rowe,

Saturday half-day and full-day field trips, Saturday evening silent auction and banquet at Favazza's Restaurant on the Italian Hill with featured speaker Tim Barksdale of the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker Search Team discussing the rediscovery of the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker and ongoing search efforts in Arkansas' Big Woods, Sunday half-day field trips and an optional Sunday wrap-up luncheon. Based out of the Holiday Inn at Hwy 44 and Hampton in St. Louis (just five minutes from either of optimal warbler migratory stopover sites Tower Grove Park and Forest Park's Kennedy Woods), the weekend is sure to offer wonderful birding opportunities and great camaraderie.

Detailed registration info will be in the March issue of ASM's quarterly publication *The Bluebird* and is available on the ASM web site [www.mobirds.org](http://www.mobirds.org) under "Meetings". Questions can be directed to ASM President Sue Gustafson at 314-968-8128.

## **Did You Send in Your Membership Survey?**

In February's *Tale Feathers*, our Board of Directors asked you to complete the **PINK** membership survey. This is a very important opportunity for our membership to voice your opinion about the direction our chapter takes in the future. If you have lost your survey and would like to participate, please contact Mary Dueren, the *Tale Feathers* newsletter editor, evening phone number: 314-576-1473. The deadline is March 31, 2006.

# Conservation Area Checklist Project (CACHE)

— Sue Gustafson

The Audubon Society of Missouri (ASM) is pleased to announce that it has entered into a Cooperative Agreement with the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) in developing a web-based database to collect bird occurrence data at MDC Conservation Areas. The goal is to collect enough bird occurrence records to generate useful bird checklists for Conservation Areas. This Conservation Area Checklist Project will be known as CACHE. Everyone can help participate in this important project by birding Conservation Areas and recording their sightings. Here is more info to get birders acquainted with the project:

## How

Birders will bird Conservation Areas and make lists of birds heard and/or seen. This is not a point count project. There is no specific route and no required time periods for observation. Any birder can participate and contribute observations to the database by going to the ASM web site [www.mobirds.org](http://www.mobirds.org). Birders may visit sites at any time and as many times as desired. Visits may be by individuals or groups. St. Louis Audubon Society has agreed to "adopt" B.K. Leach Conservation Area as a site that we will be leading field trips to on a quarterly basis in order to collect species data for entry into the CACHE database.

The following information will be required to enter sighting information: name of the person reporting the bird(s) and number of individuals of species observed. Previously generated lists are acceptable (and encouraged!) for entry into the database. The data entry is very user friendly and merely requires the establishment of a user ID and password. Birders who would like to contribute to the project, but are unable or reluctant to enter the data onto the web site are encouraged to pass their lists on to others who will enter the data for them!

## Where

All Missouri Conservation Areas are included in the project. This means data from any Area will be accepted in the database. However, initially, ten Areas will receive special emphasis so that we will

have enough data to generate a checklist for those areas by June 1, 2006. The ten Areas are: Schell-Osage, Four Rivers, Taberville, Ten-Mile Pond, Otter Slough, Donaldson Point, B.K. Leach, Grand Pass, Union Ridge, and Deer Ridge. We will also be producing checklists for several Conservation Areas in which checklists are already well underway but are in need of more data: James A. Reed, Burr Oak Woods, Eagle Bluffs, Springfield Conservation Nature Center, and Rebel's Cove. Links to maps and locations of the Conservation Areas are provided on the web site.

For providing this service to MDC, ASM will be receiving monetary compensation from MDC to be used towards partnership habitat restoration projects that will benefit birds. Patrick Harrison is the developer and administrator of the CACHE database. Jerry Wade is serving as volunteer coordinator in encouraging birders to bird Conservation Areas.

This is a wonderful opportunity for birders to put their skills to good use by assisting in the development of checklists and to participate in a project that will reward ASM with funding to help bird habitat. So, get out there and bird MDC Conservation Areas! Questions about the project can be directed to Jerry Wade at [wadej@missouri.edu](mailto:wadej@missouri.edu).



Photo by : Mike Grant



## Birding Trips for March and April

John Solodar

March 11, Saturday - Busch Conservation Area Annual Woodcock and Owl Prowl. Note the 5:00 PM starting time. We return to Busch for the annual Woodcock and Owl Prowl inaugurated by Jim Malone many years ago. Pat Lueders will lead this always popular event which will start from Hampton Lake. We'll spend the late afternoon searching for owls and then go to a good location to see and hear the woodcocks perform their mating calls and flights.

March 25, Saturday - Horseshoe Lake with Riverland option. - This trip will start at Horseshoe Lake in Illinois at 8:00 AM and will be led by Paul Bauer. For those who want a longer trip we will continue on to Riverlands. Bring water and a lunch if you plan to take the Riverlands option.

April 7-9, Special weekend Prairie Chicken trip. Trip to Dunn Ranch in northwestern Missouri. See separate announcement or contact Pat Lueders at [Plueders479@aol.com](mailto:Plueders479@aol.com).

April 15, Saturday - Castlewood State Park - Mikes Brady and Grant will head up this traditional first trip of the big migratory push. Expect to see lots of early arrival warblers, vireos, some woodpeckers, thrushes, tanagers and hawks. Meet at 8:00 AM.

April 22, Saturday - Highway 79 Corridor - B.K.Leach Conservation Area will be a major focus of this trip, but we will also hit a few other areas as well. Trip leader Torrey Berger will choose from Prairie Slough, Clarence Cannon NWR, the sod farms and the Winfield Dam area. This can easily turn into an all day trip so bring lunch, water and FRS radios for communicating on the driving portions. Meet Torrey at 8:00 AM at the first parking lot for the Bittern Basin unit of B.K.Leach.

April 23, Sunday - SPECIAL ADDED TRIP, JOINT WITH WGNSS - Boone's Crossing unit of Big Muddy Refuge. This is a newly opened area in the flood plain of the Missouri River. Lots of trees, water, some brushy areas and some fields as well. This visit will require about 2-3 miles of easy level walking. We'll meet at 8:00 AM at the parking lot of the Chesterfield Recreation Center. John Solodar

will lead this trip and his experience in the area indicates that the birding should be good.

### How to get there:

Boone's Crossing Unit - To get there from mid-St. Louis County, take Hwy 40 (I-64) to the Boone's Crossing exit in Chesterfield Valley. Take a right at the light at the top of the ramp and you will quickly come to a T at the north outer road. Go left, west, 2.3 miles to the Chesterfield Recreation Center and park in the lot here. The actual parking lot for the Boone's Crossing unit of the Big Muddy Refuge only has space for 6 cars and we will carpool to that lot from the Chesterfield Recreation Area.

Busch Conservation Area - Take U.S.40/I-64 west into St. Charles County. Take Hwy 94 south from U.S 40 about 1 mile to Hwy D. Turn right and go about 1.5 miles to the entrance on the right. Turn left at the "T" to Hampton Lake and meet in the parking lot. For trips using a H.Q starting point turn right at the "T".

Castlewood State Park - Take Big Bend west from I-270 for about 6 miles. Turn left on Ries Road. Follow Ries to its termination, then turn left into the Park. Park in lot on right just before the first small stream.

Columbia Bottom - Take Riverview Blvd north from the northern leg of I-270 (the last exit in Missouri before I-270 crosses into Illinois) and go 2.8 miles to Columbia Bottom entrance on the right. Go 1.7 miles and meet at the River Access Parking lot on the left.

Highway 79 Corridor - Starting point is the first, or southern, parking lot for Bittern Basin, a new unit of B.K.Leach. From I-70 take Hwy 79 north through Elsberry. Just north of Elsberry turn right on County Rd P with a sign for Prairie Slough. The road bends to the left after about 1/2 mile and the gravel parking lot on the left is just after the bend.

Horseshoe Lake - Take I-70 east across Poplar Street ridge. Exit at Highway 111 (exit 6) and turn left. Go north a few miles to the State park entrance (on left). Meet at the first parking lot on the right.

We hope you will share our excitement about spending an evening with Dr. Safina, learning about his personal journey and how each of us has a role in preserving our Blue Oceans.

7:00 p.m.—Dinner Service

**Space is limited, so please register early** to be sure you can enjoy this wonderful evening!

## Annual Banquet Registration Form

Make checks payable to St. Louis Audubon Society.

A black and white photograph of a large colony of albatrosses on a dark, rocky shore. The birds are mostly white with dark wingtips and long, hooked beaks. They are gathered in a dense group, with some standing and others sitting or nesting. The background is dark and indistinct.

## Bottomland Forest Restoration at Creve Coeur Lake County Park

-Sue Gustafson, USFWS Urban Bird Conservation Program Coordinator

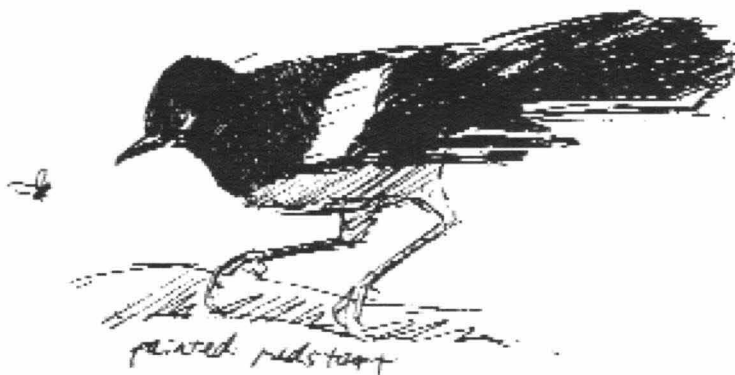
One of the projects of the St. Louis Urban Bird Conservation Treaty Program, a Cooperative Agreement Program between St. Louis Audubon Society and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS), is the expansion of the marsh at Little Creve Coeur Marsh and restoration of bottomland forest at Creve Coeur Lake County Park's western boundary in the Missouri River floodplain.

The wetlands complex will be expanded to fill the area south of the existing Little Creve Coeur Marsh, which was formerly occupied by agricultural fields and an athletic association complex. Demolition of all of the athletic field fixtures was completed last fall. The County is working with various partners in the planning and financing of the wetlands expansion; partners include wetlands consultants from the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Missouri Department of Conservation. The FWS Urban Bird Conservation Program will provide \$22,500 in funding for the marsh expansion.

The bottomland forest restoration was recently completed with funding of \$17,500 from the Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative Grant to St. Louis Audubon Society. Nine hundred twenty five trees with tree guards were purchased and planted on the far west boundary of Little Creve Coeur Marsh; the trees are bordered to the west by River Valley Drive. The newly planted trees are four to five feet tall, and if you are standing on the west end of the berm/dike along the south side of the marsh, the newly planted trees can be seen as a vast swath to the northwest. As this area was originally bottomland forest in the Missouri River floodplain, the County Parks Department is attempting to restore it to its natural state. In addition to providing valuable wildlife habitat, the bottomland forest will also provide a safety barrier to the birds and wildlife in the marsh amidst potential threats of commercial development on non-park property just west of River Valley Drive. (This area is part of the Howard Bend Levee District, and as we've seen in other levee districts, levee heights such as that of Howard Bend usually signal a green light for development to ensue.)

Tree species include: Pecan, Shellbark

Hickory, Kentucky Coffeetree, Black Walnut, White Oak, Swamp White Oak, Shingle Oak, Overcup Oak, Bur Oak, Pin Oak, and Shumard Oak. As Creve Coeur Lake County Park is a Missouri Important Bird Area, St. Louis Audubon is pleased to be working with the County to provide much needed habitat for a diversity of bird species in this floodplain, and we will continue to emphasize the need for restoration and preservation of the floodplain in its natural state.



## **"AMERICA'S BIRDIEST COUNTY" CONTEST** **-April 21-23**

It's time for St Louis' second annual "Birdiest County" Contest! We're calling all birders to help us prove that we are Americas's birdiest county. The Wild Bird Center is again organizing this count of our local birds. The count will be held over the weekend of April 21-23. Each participant will be limited to a 24-hour period of counting. We want to be sure that all of St Louis County is covered, so we're asking participants to commit to specific areas. You can work in teams, and maps delineating count areas will be available April 1 at either Wild Bird Center location. Please come in early to register your team and select your counting area. We're requesting a minimum pledge of \$10 to participate. You can collect pledges from friends, family, and co-workers based on how many birds your team spots. The money collected will be distributed among the several groups-Wild Bird Rehab, ST Louis Audubon, American Bird Conservancy, Cornell Lab's Backyard Feeder Count and World Bird Sanctuary. You may designate which group your collected pledges will go to.

Contact Judy Rowe at the Creve Coeur Wild Bird Center-314-439-9453 or  
Denise Kirkpatrick at the South County Wild Bird Center-314-842-1496 for more details.

# St. Louis Audubon Society to Participate in Wings of Spring Confluence Birding Festival

April 28-29, 2006

The first annual Wings of Spring Confluence Birding Festival will be held on Friday and Saturday, April 28 and 29, 2006. A partnership of organizations within the Confluence Greenway is planning the Festival to spotlight birding opportunities where the great rivers meet. The Festival is reserved for school groups on Friday, April 28. The public is invited to attend the Festival on Saturday, April 29, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The Wings of Spring Confluence Birding Festival will be based at Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary near Alton, Illinois. "The Festival will offer programs and events for all levels of birding interest including educational programs, speakers, vendors, on-site tours of migratory shore birds and guided birding tours at other Confluence sites," according to Ken Buchholz, program chair. Buchholz, representing Audubon Missouri, said "The Festival will celebrate the Confluence, part of the Mississippi Flyway, as an important area for birds and a destination for bird watching."

"The Sanctuary has recently been designated as an Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society," said Pat McGinnis, Project Manager with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "The site was also voted the No. 1 birding site in the area by the Riverfront Times."

Local organizations planning the Festival include: Alton Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau, Audubon Missouri, Confluence Greenway Partnership, Missouri Botanical Garden, Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri and Illinois Departments of Natural Resources, National Great Rivers Research & Education Center, **St. Louis Audubon Society**, Trailnet, Inc. and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

More info will be in upcoming newsletters, and the Festival program will be released in the spring. For more information on the Festival contact the Alton Convention and Visitors Bureau at 1-800-258-6645 or visit the website at [www.wingsofspring.org](http://www.wingsofspring.org). Persons or businesses that would like to be part of the Festival should contact Ken Buchholz at 314-368-7639.

## Tale Feathers

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### St. Louis Audubon Society 2004 - 2005

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## Join the St. Louis Audubon Society and the National Audubon Society

As a joint member with National Audubon, you will receive National Audubon's quarterly magazine (Audubon) as well as St. Louis Audubon Society's Newsletter (Tale Feathers). Now you also have the opportunity to join only the St. Louis Audubon Society, receive Tale Feathers, and participate in the educational and conservation activities of St. Louis Audubon. There is no distinction between individual and family membership. Dues cover all members at the same address. For information, call (314) 822-6595.

Use this form to join St. Louis Audubon / National Audubon

For joint membership in St. Louis Audubon Society and National Audubon Society, Make checks payable to **National Audubon Society** and mail to St. Louis Audubon Society, P.O.Box 220227, Kirkwood, MO. 63122

\_\_\_\_\_Membership/\$35 For renewal in the National Audubon Society, we recommend that you use the forms supplied by National Audubon. For more information, contact Anne Rankin Horton at 636-256-3402.

\_\_\_\_\_Introductory Membership / \$20 \_\_\_\_\_Special Two -Year Introductory Membership / \$30

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